General Assembly

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Agenda item 119 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/583/Add.2)*]

56/164. Protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons

The General Assembly,

Deeply disturbed by the alarmingly high numbers of internally displaced persons throughout the world who receive inadequate protection and assistance, and conscious of the serious problem that this is creating for the international community,

Conscious of the human rights and the humanitarian dimensions of the problem of internally displaced persons and the responsibilities that this poses for States and the international community to explore methods and means better to address the protection and assistance needs of those persons,

Noting the growing awareness of the international community of the issue of internally displaced persons worldwide and the urgency of addressing the root causes of their displacement and finding durable solutions, including voluntary return in safety and with dignity or local integration,

Emphasizing that national authorities have the primary responsibility to provide protection and assistance to internally displaced persons within their jurisdiction as well as to address the root causes for the displacement problem in cooperation with the international community,

Recalling the relevant norms of international human rights law, international humanitarian law and analogous refugee law, and recognizing that the protection of internally displaced persons has been strengthened by identifying, reaffirming and consolidating specific standards for their protection, in particular through the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement,[1]

Taking note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 2001/54 of 24 April 2001,[2] and recalling the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by

[1] E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, annex.

[2] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 3* (E/2001/23), chap. II, sect. A.

the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[3] regarding the need to develop global strategies to address the problem of internal displacement,

Deploring practices of forced displacement and their negative consequences for the enjoyment of fundamental human rights by large groups of populations,

Noting with appreciation the work of the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons in developing a normative framework, in particular a compilation and analysis of legal norms and the development of guiding principles, analysing institutional arrangements, undertaking dialogue with Governments and issuing a series of reports on particular country situations together with proposals for remedial measures,

Welcoming the cooperation established between the Representative of the Secretary-General and the United Nations and other international and regional organizations, in particular the participation of the Representative of the Secretary-General in the meetings of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and its subsidiary bodies, and encouraging further strengthening of this collaboration in order to promote better protection, assistance and development strategies for internally displaced persons,

Recognizing the central role of the Emergency Relief Coordinator for the inter-agency coordination of protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons, and in this regard welcoming the establishment of the Senior Inter-Agency Network on Internal Displacement and the decision to set up within the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat a unit for coordinating activities regarding internally displaced persons in order to promote better protection, assistance and development strategies for internally displaced persons, as well as to enhance further accountability by the United Nations system,

Acknowledging with appreciation the independent coordination within, as well as the independent work of, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and other humanitarian agencies in protecting and assisting internally displaced persons in cooperation with relevant international bodies,

Recalling its resolution 54/167 of 17 December 1999,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons;[4]

2. *Commends* the Representative of the Secretary-General for the activities undertaken so far, for the catalytic role that he continues to play in raising the level of consciousness about the plight of internally displaced persons and for his efforts to promote a comprehensive strategy that focuses on prevention as well as better protection, assistance and development for internally displaced persons;

3. *Expresses its appreciation* to those Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have provided protection and assistance to internally displaced persons and have supported the work of the Representative of the Secretary-General;

4. *Encourages* the Representative of the Secretary-General, through continuous dialogue with Governments and all intergovernmental and non-

[3] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[4] See A/56/168.

governmental organizations concerned, to continue his analysis of the causes of internal displacement, the needs and rights of those displaced, measures of prevention and ways to strengthen protection, assistance and solutions for internally displaced persons, taking into account specific situations, and to include information thereon in his reports to the Commission on Human Rights and the General Assembly;

5. *Welcomes* the specific attention paid by the Representative of the Secretary-General to the special protection, assistance and development needs of internally displaced women, children and other groups with specific needs and his commitment to pay more systematic and in-depth attention to their needs;

6. *Also welcomes* the fact that the Representative of the Secretary-General has made use of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement[1] in his dialogue with Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and requests him to continue his efforts in that regard, including considering strategies for addressing such concerns;

7. *Notes with appreciation* that an increasing number of States, United Nations agencies and regional and non-governmental organizations are making use of the Guiding Principles, encourages the further dissemination and application of the Guiding Principles, expresses its appreciation for the dissemination and promotion of the Guiding Principles at regional and other seminars on displacement, and encourages the Representative of the Secretary-General to continue to initiate or support such seminars in consultation with regional organizations, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other relevant institutions, and to provide support for efforts to promote capacity-building and use of the Guiding Principles;

8. *Calls upon* all Governments to continue to facilitate the activities of the Representative of the Secretary-General, in particular Governments with situations of internal displacement, encourages them to give serious consideration to inviting the Representative to visit their countries so as to enable him to study and analyse more fully the issues involved, and thanks those Governments that have already done so;

9. *Invites* Governments to give due consideration, in dialogue with the Representative of the Secretary-General, to the recommendations and suggestions addressed to them, in accordance with his mandate, and to inform him of measures taken thereon;

10. *Calls upon* Governments to provide protection and assistance, including reintegration and development assistance, to internally displaced persons, and to facilitate the efforts of relevant United Nations agencies and humanitarian organizations in these respects, including by further improving access to internally displaced persons;

11. *Notes with appreciation* the increased attention paid to the issue of internally displaced persons in the consolidated inter-agency appeals process, and encourages further efforts to improve the integration of the protection and assistance needs of internally displaced persons in consolidated appeals;

12. *Emphasizes* the central role of the Emergency Relief Coordinator for the inter-agency coordination of protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons, and in this regard urges the Senior Inter-Agency Network on Internal Displacement and all relevant United Nations humanitarian assistance, human rights and development organizations concerned to enhance further their collaboration and

coordination, especially through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, in order to promote and better carry out protection, assistance and development activities for internally displaced persons and to enhance further their accountability, as well as to provide all possible assistance and support to the Representative of the Secretary-General, and invites the Network better to inform Member States of its activities;

13. *Welcomes* the initiatives undertaken by regional organizations, such as the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe and the Economic Community of West African States, to address the protection, assistance and development needs of internally displaced persons, and encourages them and other regional organizations to strengthen their activities and their cooperation with the Representative of the Secretary-General;

14. *Notes* the establishment of the global internally displaced persons database, as advocated by the Representative of the Secretary-General, and encourages the members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and Governments to continue to collaborate on and support this effort, including by providing financial resources;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide his Representative, from within existing resources, with all necessary assistance to carry out his mandate effectively, and encourages the Representative to continue to seek the contribution of States, relevant organizations and institutions in order to put the work of the Representative on a more stable basis;

16. *Requests* the Representative of the Secretary-General to prepare, for consideration by the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

17. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the question of protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons at its fifty-eighth session.

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001